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7852 Walker Drive, Suite 200  
Greenbelt, Maryland 20770  
phone: 301-459-7590, fax: 301-577-5575  
internet: [www.isitel.com](http://www.isitel.com), e-mail: [jsi@isitel.com](mailto:jsi@isitel.com)

October 9, 2019

**Via ECFS**

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 14-58, 07-135, and CC Docket No. 01-92  
The Impacted RLEC HUBB Filers  
Notice of *Ex Parte***

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Monday, October 7, John Kuykendall and Cassandra Heyne of JSI (“JSI Representatives”) met with Preston Wise, Legal Advisor to Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) Chairman Ajit Pai, to discuss a joint petition seeking waiver of the March 1, 2018 deadline for entering broadband location information into the HUBB portal.<sup>1</sup> The following individuals joined the meeting via teleconference representing the six companies that participated in the Joint Petition: Bryan Roth and Tracy Bandemer of Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc.; Troy Schilling of West River Telecom; Justin Huebner of Manawa Telephone Company; Harvey Souders and Teresa Sadler of Sand Creek Communications Company, Lisa Wigington of Telephone Electronics Corporation; and Dave Fox and Mike Fitzpatrick of Westphalia Telephone Company (collectively, the “Impacted RLEC HUBB Filers” or the “Companies”).

The Joint Petition was filed by the Impacted RLEC HUBB Filers after they experienced significant reductions in universal service support due to not certifying in the HUBB by March 1, 2018 that they had no locations to report for the deployment reporting period of 2017. The Companies were notified over a month after the March 1, 2018 deadline that they did not complete the certifications, and for some of the waiver participants there was confusing guidance from USAC about whether the certification had been completed. After receiving clarification regarding the need to make the filing, each of the Impacted RLEC HUBB Filers certified “no locations” as soon as possible.

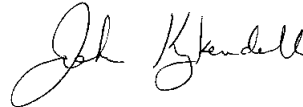
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<sup>1</sup> Impacted RLEC HUBB Filers Petition for Waiver of Section 54.316(c)(1) of the Commission’s rules, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al. (filed June 11, 2019) (“Joint Petition”).

During the meeting, the JSI Representatives explained that in February 2019, the Companies began noticing that a significant portion of their universal service funding was being withheld due to not certifying “no locations” by the March 1, 2018 deadline and subsequently filed the Joint Petition. By the time the Joint Petition was filed, each of the Impacted RLEC HUBB Filers had been penalized significantly: a reduction in support for each day that they were late to complete the certification. This penalty amount essentially removes support for dozens of locations in rural, high-cost areas—without reducing the buildout obligations. The JSI Representatives and Companies then emphasized that the financial penalties for missing the deadline for the certifications are extreme and contrary to the FCC’s goal of closing the digital divide. They urged the FCC to expeditiously grant the petition and direct USAC to reimburse each company for the amount of support that was withheld.

Please direct any questions regarding the filing to the undersigned.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Kuykendall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Kuykendall" clearly distinguishable.

John Kuykendall  
JSI Vice President  
301-459-7590  
[jkuykendall@jsitel.com](mailto:jkuykendall@jsitel.com)

cc: Preston Wise